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SUMMARY

(Office of the Assistant to the
Director of Central Intelligence)

Concepts

The Office of the Assistant to the Director of Central Intelligence seeks to achieve the broadest and deepest public understanding of the Central Intelligence Agency, the Intelligence Community, and the intelligence profession, and identifies appropriate themes and audiences.

This Office is not involved in presentations or briefings for other components of the Executive Branch or for operational or mission-oriented activities. Rather, its challenge is to give expression to the obligation of public accountability that the Central Intelligence Agency has and that has been dramatized, often unfairly, by the highly unfavorable and damaging media coverage resulting from the Church and Pike Committees' investigations.

In responding to the public's interest in the Agency, this Office takes care to protect valid intelligence secrets, particularly those relating to sources and methods which the Director of Central Intelligence, by law, is required to protect. This statutory requirement results in the often-maligned "no comment" posture on some press queries and constitutes a special element of difficulty in the fundamental process of establishing the credibility of our press relations.

Similarly, any discussion of domestic politics or foreign policy is scrupulously avoided. There is, however, an attempt to find ways to make more available information which does not violate secrecy requirements or touch on foreign or domestic governmental policy.

Operations

+ We answer questions posed by representatives of the news media, and provide unclassified background briefings on selected topics for newsmen by Agency analysts.

- + A Publications Review Board, chaired by the Assistant to the Director, reviews manuscripts written by Agency employees (and former employees) for non-official publication outside the Agency.

- + Support is provided to the Director of Central Intelligence and the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, and other selective speakers of the Agency, for public addresses to promote an understanding of the intelligence organization and process. A file of "talking points" is maintained dealing with current problems and likely questions from the public.

- + We support the Director of Central Intelligence in his role as spokesman for the Intelligence Community, coordinating public affairs aspects with representatives of other agencies of the Executive Branch and Congress as appropriate.

- + We promote the publication of articles about the Agency through responsive cooperation with responsible authors and publishers when such cooperation would promote the public's understanding of the Agency and its processes.

- + Letters are written to newspapers, journals, and other publications to set the record straight or correct false information about the Agency when this can be done without jeopardizing or revealing classified information or sources and methods.

- + Notes are released periodically to the news media concerning matters of Agency policy, e.g. February 1976 statement on the clergy and journalists.

- + We respond to persons writing to the Agency for information on the intelligence organization and process, and appropriate pamphlets to assist students and the public in understanding the Agency and intelligence are maintained and periodically updated.

- + Advice is provided to operating components on public affairs aspects of contact by Agency personnel with the public that occurs during the normal course of operation.

- + Unclassified reports prepared by analysts are forwarded to the Library of Congress and made available for duplication and sale to the public at cost, on topics that include climatology, terrorism and Soviet defense expenditures.

In the course of contacts with the news media, certain operational guidelines have evolved, such as:

1. We do not normally provide background briefings for foreign newsmen.
2. Ground rules for the briefings are that there may be no attribution of any quotes, direct or indirect, to the Agency or Agency personnel.
3. Briefings are held only at Headquarters.
4. A list of unclassified Agency reports is mailed to journalists and media representatives monthly, and requests for these are filled at no cost to media requesters.

In meeting speaking engagements, considerable care is given to the choice of audiences to provide the best possible forums for the Director of Central Intelligence and the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence. Similarly, some television interview programs provide a better format than others, and consideration must be given to satisfying the requests of the networks in an even-handed way. Public speeches by the Director of Central Intelligence and the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence are recorded and filed by the Assistant to the Director's Office to provide a complete record of public utterances by these two officers.

Speakers for universities and colleges are drawn by the Assistant to the Director from a list of Agency officials. Smaller groups such as fraternal organizations, high school visitation groups, etc., are addressed by an Office of Training officer. We require a written invitation in all cases.

CIA-Connected Issues in the News

June 1976 - Present

1. COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS/NIE: Leaks to the press about the contents of a National Intelligence Estimate on Soviet strategic objectives claimed that outside experts convinced CIA that Soviets were aiming for superiority and not parity.
2. MICRONESIA: CIA is accused of "regularly" conducting electronic surveillance of Micronesian negotiators in talks with U.S. over future status. Senate Select Committee held hearings last month.
3. LIAISON SERVICE: Allegations of CIA complicity in illegal activities in the U.S. by foreign intelligence services, e.g., Korean intelligence corruption of Member of Congress, DINA (Chile) responsibility for the assassination of former Chilean Ambassador Letelier, SAVAK (Iran) strongarming of Iranian students at American universities. Press charges are basically to the effect that CIA obtains reciprocal tolerance for its own actions in the respective foreign countries.
4. SWINE FEVER: Agency falsely accused of introducing swine fever into Cuba in 1971 with major impact on Cuba's agriculture.
5. PHILIP AGEE: Former CIA employee is the author of a book disclosing CIA names and Latin American operations. He is a perennial problem due to publicity given his criticism of CIA activities.
6. EDWIN G. MOORE is former Agency employee who is accused of trying to sell classified documents to the Soviets for \$200,000.
7. VIKTOR BELENKO, pilot of Russian MIG-25, is quoted extensively by New York Times in story leaked by "U.S. intelligence debriefers."

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The CIA continues to be a frequent target of false allegations by individuals in a variety of situations and out of a variety of motives. Persons standing trial, adventurers wishing to be admired as spies, authors and lecturers seeking sensational publicity to promote themselves and their writings are typical of these.

CIA-Connected Issues in the News

1975 - Present

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CHILE: Former Ambassador Edward M. Korry says everybody lied about Chile and accused CIA of a "massive undertaking" in the overthrow of Salvador Allende.

CUBANA AIR LINER CRASH: CIA blamed by Cuba for sabotage of plane in which 73 died. A Cuban exile leader and two Venezuelans have been charged.

ASSASSINATIONS: Continuing stories on Lee Harvey Oswald allege the Agency had information on his activities prior to the assassination, withheld the information from the Warren Commission, and then attempted to cover up the withholding. In another case, an Agency release of material in an FOIA request triggered an AP story (picked up by TASS) that CIA mounted a propaganda campaign to counter Commission critics.

ROCKEFELLER AND CHURCH COMMITTEE HEARINGS:

Mail Openings

Drug Testing on Unwitting

Failure to Destroy Poisons

Domestic Surveillance of Dissidents

Assassination Plots Against Foreign Leaders

CIA-Mafia Connections